

AARP® Real Possibilities **Connecticut**

Energy and Technology Committee
March 1, 2018
Testimony of AARP CT on
Senate Bill Number 9
AAC Connecticut's Energy Future

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AARP is a nonpartisan, social mission organization with an age 50+ membership of nearly 38 million nationwide, and approximately 600,000 members here in Connecticut. AARP supports livable communities for all ages, aging in place initiatives and financial opportunity and resiliency for everyone as they work age and retire. We are before the General Assembly every year on a multitude of bills that support these issues.

Many of our members are on low or fixed incomes and struggle to make ends meet. With the highest electric rates in the continental United States, many older Americans and those on fixed incomes are too often faced with the choice between high electric bills and paying for food and health care.

High electricity rates are a problem for residents in Connecticut, and that fact should be a major factor driving the focus of our energy policy. The focus of our comments will be on affordability.

The bill proposes that 40 percent of the power come from renewables by 2030. AARP asks that the cost to ratepayers of this proposal be identified in detail. The strategy should also contain steps to minimize the rate impact of this mandate.

The bill mandates a long-term purchase requirement through 2039 (20 years) of certain customer owned generation. Again, it is important that the impact on rates be identified and considered.

The bill mandates a reduction in energy consumption. A new conservation adjustment mechanism rate surcharge is established. Given the likely negative impact on rates the proposal might not be the most prudent approach at this time.

The bill establishes a new charge for a Clean Energy Fund. Again is a new charge on rates in the best interest of ratepayers?

Finally, the bill could saddle distribution companies with new long term contracts for demand response programs. Again, is this something Connecticut ratepayers can really afford?

In short, I urge the legislation be modified with cost and rate impact considerations defined to ensure that all new surcharges are actually in the ratepayer's best interest.

It is important that the legislature consider and mitigate all of the additional new requirements that this bill contains. It's imperative to look at the collective impacts of the bill, which will drive up rates on residential customers, which is unfair and unreasonable.